

Oklahoma

ARMY & AIR NATIONAL GUARD

FRONTLINE

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OFFICE OF THE
**ADJUTANT
GENERAL**

Maj. Gen.

Harry M. Wyatt III



Thanks to everyone's tremendous efforts, we continue to set the standard with our recruiting successes. It has been a Herculean push, spear-headed by our Recruiting and Retention Force that has advanced the Oklahoma Army National Guard ahead of many of our contemporaries. We are setting the pace for others to follow.

For the month of April we had another 157 enlistments! We are now at an assigned strength of 7,086 soldiers, just 265 soldiers short of our authorized strength of 7,351.

I recently read an interesting survey in the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program pamphlet that addressed, by percentage, why young men and women join the Army National Guard that I want to share with you.

Twenty-three percent joined primarily for the college tuition assistance and GI Bill benefits. Another 23% really had no one particular reason for joining. Eighteen percent joined for the challenge and training – specifically physical training, leadership training and skills training. Sixteen percent of our new enlistees are driven by multiple reasons for joining – the money and benefits, retirement benefits, and being able to serve their state and nation. Fourteen percent are looking forward to retirement and joined because of the retirement benefits. And six percent joined because of the military benefits.

Whatever the reason, we have an attractive package to offer young men and women. Many see the advantage of membership in the Guard to better their lives. It is our job now to see that we do not let these men and women down and that they have every opportunity to achieve their goals while they are with us.

If you could not attend the Leadership Conference and the 49th Oklahoma National Guard Association Conference and Military Ball you missed one excellent event. My thanks to all who helped put the event together and those who attended. Next year, in Tulsa, we celebrate the 50th year for our conference and ball. It will be a weekend you won't want to miss.

We are entering our annual training period next month. The 45th Field Artillery Brigade will perform theirs at Ft. Sill, the 45th Infantry Brigade at Ft. Chaffee and Camp Gruber and the 90th Troop Command at Camp Gruber. I want to stress safety during this period. Lead by example and be safe at all times ... our number one mission is to bring all of our soldiers home safely.

UNIT NEWS

In Brief

Operation Iraqi Freedom

245th Military Intelligence

Soldiers of the 245th Military Intelligence Company returned home from Operation Iraqi Freedom on January 27th.

1st Battalion, 158 Field Artillery (MLRS)

Approximately 150 Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery (MLRS) were mobilized for deployment training at Fort Lewis, Wash. The unit deployed overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and are currently serving in Iraq. The Soldiers will assist in security operations while deployed.

137th Aerial Port Squadron

Airmen of the 137th APS have been deployed to the Southwest Asia theatre of operations.

205th Engineering Installation Squadron

Airmen of the 205th EIS have been deployed to the Southwest Asia theatre of operations.



Strength Management

30 SEP 06
GOAL7,351

CURRENT
STRENGTH*...7,086

SHORT
OF GOAL265

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
COL Pat Scully

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Cheryl Thomas

FRONTLINE LAYOUT
1LT Geoff Legler

FRONTLINE STAFF
LTC John Altebaumer
SFC Kendall James
SGT Claudia Bullard

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Air Assault School zero day is only the begin of a long test

by Maj. Greg Park
Camp Gruber, Okla.- “Zero Day” of air assault school is a make or break test of a Soldier’s physical and mental endurance held one day before the start of the 11-day air assault course. For 206 Soldiers from around the country, the rigorous physical and mental requirements to qualify for Air Assault School would mean that only 179 would remain at the end of the day.

“The hardest part of the course is Zero Day,” according to Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Conaway, an air assault instructor from Ft. Benning, Ga. “According to Army statistics, the failure rate for the entire Air Assault Course is between 30-50 percent. It is one of the Army’s most rigorous courses that include a nine-part obstacle course, followed by a two-mile run and several hours of classroom instruction and testing,” he said.

The first test of each Soldier’s endurance and physical fitness is the obstacle course. Each student must successfully traverse seven of the nine obstacles including the first one known as the “tough-one” and the final one called “the weaver”.

“If you get afraid and lose your confidence... you will mess up,” said distinguished honor graduate and Oklahoma Guardsmen, Sgt. Bucky Hopwood. “At the end of Zero Day we sent 27 Soldiers home,” he said. “Most were disqualified

for failing to complete the nine-part obstacle course. Several others failed the two-mile run in combat boots in the allotted time of less than 18 minutes.”

Once past zero-day the instruction begins which is divided into three phases and trains Soldiers to deal with heights and pay attention to detail and safety

Iraq and Afghanistan.

During phase two “Sling Load Operations” students are trained on the proper techniques to use when loading a CH-47 or a UH-60 and on how to properly rig sling loads below each type of helicopter.

The sling load exam is very difficult and has a 15% failure

Students who have difficulty grasping the basic concepts behind sling loading are given extra help by staff at the end of the day or during their free time if needed.

Phase three of the course teaches the basics of repelling. Each student is taught how to tie a hip rappel seat within 90 seconds, performing a proper hookup to the rope within 15 seconds and the proper way to do three types of rappels. Once each student has demonstrated they can tie the seat properly and conduct each of the rappels properly, they are required to rappel from a UH-60 hovering at 90 feet off the ground.

The final test of the course is the 12 mile road march. Each student must complete the march within three hours while carrying a combat load which is about 35 pounds. “There is a lot of motivation for students to complete this as it is the last thing before graduation,” said Sgt. 1st Class Conaway.

On Easter morning, graduation day, 134 Soldiers stood in formation to be honored for their hard work and to pin on the coveted Air Assault Badge. “Desire and great physical conditioning is a must in completing one of the toughest courses in the Army,” Conaway said. “These Soldiers have been put through some tough training in a short period of time and have earned the right to wear the Air Assault Badge proudly.”



Soldiers do push-ups as they wait to attempt the 2nd obstacle, known as “The Climber”. Air Assault candidates had to complete seven of the nine obstacles to successfully complete the zero day requirement.



Air Assault students prepare to sling load a HUMMV under a CH-47 Chinook. Sling load is one of the most challenging phases of the Air Assault course, but most students find it to be very exciting.



Air Assault students are required to make multiple rappels from both the 15 and 60 foot rappel towers before they are allowed to rappel from a UH-60 “Blackhawk” hovering at 90 feet above the ground.



during all air-assault operations.

The first phase of the Air Assault School is “Combat Assault”, which teaches each Soldier how to call in aircraft to a specific location and how to direct them to fire upon the enemy. Information taught in this phase of the course is routinely used in

rate. During the exam each student has two minutes to find three of four deficiencies on a vehicle that has been prepared for sling load.

“Sling load is hands on and not that difficult if the students follow the sequence they have been taught,” said Conaway.



Brig. Gen. James R. Marshall retires after a career of excellence

by Sgt. Claudia Bullard, 105th MPAD, OKARNG

OKLAHOMA CITY—Against the backdrop of an enormous American flag, Brig. Gen. James R. Marshall, Air National Guard assistant to the staff judge advocate, bid adieu to a 38-year Air Force career on April 26 at Tinker Air Force Base's Dock II hangar.

Just outside the hangar doors, an Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) plane with its crew stood ready for viewing by friends, family, business associates and fellow Guardsmen who gathered to celebrate a lifetime of achievement with a man they know as a mentor and leader.

Marshall listened quietly while Maj. Gen. Jack L. Rives, United States Air Force judge advocate general, recognized a long list of achievements beginning with Marshall's post-WWII childhood in Germany to his present appointment as the Air National Guard assistant to staff judge advocate without excluding his upcoming 25-year anniversary to his wife and legal peer Karen Henson-Marshall.

Addressing Henson-Marshall, Rives quipped, "I hope this (retirement) is not the only gift."

Rives hailed Marshall as a man who followed the JAG values of wisdom, valor and justice "to make sure we live in a world of justice as much as he could make it so."

"Many people are doing things more effectively because of his influence," said Rives.

Maj. Gen. Harry Wyatt III, adjutant general for the State of Oklahoma, who first met Marshall as a civilian, called him an "exceptional blend of perfect officer and professional," adding that his

retirement will create a "loss in our formation."

Rives presented Marshall the Distinguished Service Medal for "inspiring the outstanding work consistently accomplished by 11 Air National Guard judge advocates

and paralegal liaisons". Wyatt presented Marshall the Oklahoma Distinguished Service medal which among other attributes called him "an exceptional blend of perfect officership and extraordinary talent."

Marshall also received a retirement certificate and the President's Certificate of Appreciation for helping "maintain the security of the country during a critical time in its history." The President's Certificate is signed by President George W. Bush.

Henson-Marshall received red roses and the Air Force Certificate of Appreciation for her "endless support and understanding making possible your spouse's lasting contribution to the mission."



When Marshall's turn to speak came, it was to thank others for his accomplishments. He asked the honor guard to pass his medals for viewing by the guests.

"Without you I couldn't have done a fraction of what I did," said Marshall. "I wear them proudly on your behalf."

Marshall spent many of his formative years in post-WWII Germany as a military dependent living in Kitzingen. Ten years

after the war's end, the city remained largely destroyed—a testament to the awesome might of air power. Marshall said this was the beginning of his interest in the Air Force. Later he was drawn to the Air Force more so by the working relationship between officers and the enlisted—a relationship Marshall said is based on mutual respect.

The ceremony concluded with a solemn retirement of Marshall's personal flag which was rolled into a blue case with Marshall's name printed on the outside.

Outside the hangar, a much-anticipated storm brought relief from unseasonably high temperatures this spring. Marshall, from his position on the stage saw the AWACS crew step onto the steps from the plane's hatch, to pay honor to National Anthem. Later, he said the rain and the crew's actions made the day perfect.

Engineer earns Bronze Star Medal

by Sgt. Claudia Bullard, 105th MPAD, OKARNG

Prior to the weekend of April 1, Capt. Elmer "Bobby" Bruner Jr. had just one thing on his mind as a teams officer for the Oklahoma Army National Guard's 45th Rear Operations Center in Oklahoma City.

Capt. Bruner was responsible for getting the firing range set up for the unit's annual weapons qualification at Camp Gruber located near Muskogee. However, he received a phone call the night before telling him he had to be on the zero range at noon for some type of ceremony.

Little did he know he would figure prominently in the ceremony?

Capt. Bruner, who originally hails from Wewoka but now resides in Edmond, was shocked to find out he was being awarded the Bronze Star Medal and spent the remainder of the weekend in awe of what just happened.

He was recognized for his actions in Iraq from August 2004 to February 2005 as the commander of B Company, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion, 20th Engineer Brigade. Prior to taking over as the B Co. commander, Capt. Bruner commanded a Headquarters Support Company in Iraq from February 2004 to August 2004.

"I was extremely surprised," Capt.

■ Continued on page 10



Capt. Elmer "Bobby" Bruner Jr. receives the Bronze Star medal from Col. Kenneth Moore, Commander of the Oklahoma Army National Guard's 90th Troop Command.

PHOTO: Sgt. Claudia Bullard, 105th MPAD, OKARNG

Bill shorts new gear for troops to buy new aircraft

Associated Press-April 21, 2006

WASHINGTON - A Senate measure to fund the war in Iraq would chop money for troops' night vision equipment and new battle vehicles but add \$230 million for a tilt-rotor aircraft that has already cost \$18 billion and is still facing safety questions.

President Bush's request for the emergency appropriations to cover costs of the continuing war and Hurricane Katrina recovery operations included no money for the troubled V-22 Osprey, which takes off and lands like a helicopter but flies like a plane.

The Marine Corps, however, followed up with a letter to lawmakers endorsing additional V-22s, noting that it is the only active production line capable of replacing four Vietnam War-era CH-46 choppers lost since Sept. 11, 2001.

Critics maintain that it's still a curious choice to be funded in a bill whose defining purpose is to replace equipment worn out or destroyed in Iraq.

The Osprey, manufactured by Bell Helicopter, a subsidiary of Textron Inc., has been in development since the 1980s and has cost the government \$18 billion so far. It has suffered numerous setbacks over the years, including two crashes in 2000 that killed 23 people.

The Marine Corps says the program has gotten back on track since then despite an incident last month in which a V-22 momentarily took flight on its own.

To pay for the Ospreys, the Senate Appropriations Committee - guided by the Corps - cut into funding for night vision

goggles, equipment for destroying mines and explosives, fire suppression systems for light armored vehicles and new vehicles that can be transported into battle inside the V-22.

The panel insists the equipment cuts won't affect readiness.

Vice President Cheney, as secretary of defense in the first Bush administration, tried to kill the V-22, to no avail. The aircraft is popular with lawmakers, especially those from Pennsylvania and Texas, which host the manufacturing plants.

"They've hijacked the bill to spend money on their toys," said Steve Ellis of Taxpayers for Common Sense, a budget watchdog group. "You have the V-22, which isn't even



The C-17 Globemaster III is the newest, most flexible cargo aircraft to enter the airlift force. The C-17 is capable of rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo to main operating bases or directly to forward bases in the deployment area.

ready for fielding and it's getting money in the supplemental."

The V-22 is but one example of the Pentagon and lawmakers using the mammoth bill to skirt limits on the already rapidly growing defense budget.

For example, there's more than \$3 billion in funding for an ongoing overhaul of the Army that the Pentagon admits isn't directly related to fighting the war.

Meanwhile, senators have added \$228 million to procure seven C-17 Air Force cargo planes that can't be completed until 2008 at the earliest - and would eventually cost a total of almost \$2 billion.

The C-17 cargo plane is manufactured in Long Beach, Calif., by Boeing Co. The line there is now slated to close in 2008 with the completion of a 180-plane inventory. Instead, the \$228 million would purchase parts as a downpayment for building seven more planes. It would take at least another \$1.6



Soldiers, Airmen and Marines use night vision goggles similar to these to conduct covert night operations. Without these goggles, night operations are virtually impossible.

billion to finish the job.

"If it goes through, you basically force the Air Force to buy another seven planes," said a lobbyist for a rival defense contractor.

The Senate will take up the \$106.5 billion Iraq funding bill - which includes \$27.2 billion for additional hurricane relief along the Gulf Coast - on April 25. The House passed a companion \$92 billion measure last month.

Generally speaking, emergency war funding bills get less scrutiny than the Pentagon's regular budget. And since they provide crucial funding for U.S. troops and equipment, most lawmakers are reluctant to criticize the bills.

However, Senate Budget Committee Chairman Judd Gregg, R-N.H., is taking aim at \$3.5 billion the Army requested for creating smaller, independent fighting units. Gregg wants to use some of the money to finance border security initiatives and the Coast Guard's ongoing upgrade of ships, planes and helicopters.

"There's a fair amount of money in this supplemental that is not an emergency. It's essentially an attempt to pick up operational and core needs outside the usual budgeting process," Gregg said. "It's certainly in the multiple billions."

The Pentagon says restructuring the Army belongs in the Iraq spending because it would accelerate transforming 5,000-man brigades into independently functioning units and facilitate troop rotations in and out of Iraq.

But Gregg and others say the Army restructuring should be part of the regular budget and the Pentagon tacitly agrees; next year it will be funded that way.

For now, the inclusion of the expensive restructuring project in the war funding bill is a way to avoid cutting other defense programs.



The Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey is the first aircraft designed from the ground up to meet the needs of all four U.S. armed services. The tiltrotor aircraft takes off and lands like a helicopter. Once airborne, its engine nacelles can be rotated to convert the aircraft to a turboprop airplane capable of high-speed, high-altitude flight.

Family Fun at the 2nd Annual Oklahoma National Guard Appreciation Day at the Tulsa and OKC Zoos!!!





**Thanks for your support of
this event! We'll see you
next year at the 3rd Annual
Oklahoma
National
Guard
Appreciation
Day at the Zoo.**



Tricare prescription home delivery now easier using the Internet

Eligible Tricare beneficiaries now can enroll online or through the mail for home delivery of their prescription medications. Capt. Thomas McGinnis, chief of the Tricare pharmaceutical operations directorate, says once recipients are enrolled, patients can send their prescriptions to the Tricare mail order pharmacy where pharmacists will check the order against the patient's medication profile in the Defense Department's pharmacy database.

Medications complete with a reorder date are usually delivered to the beneficiary's home within 14 days after the contractor receives the prescription. The mail-order service is recommended for medications that beneficiaries use for long periods of time. With each request, the prescription is reviewed against the beneficiary's complete medication

history before it is dispensed—reducing the likelihood of adverse interactions and duplicate treatments. Pharmacists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week via a toll free number to answer questions. For more information, call Express Scripts at 1-866-363-8667 if you are within the 50 United States and its territories.

Call 1-866-275-4732 and select option one if you are outside U.S. territory. To fill a new prescription by mail, ask the doctor to write a new prescription for up to a 90-day supply (with up to three refills) of the medication. Log onto www.Express-Scripts.com and follow the prompts to print a prescription order form. Or, call Express Scripts at 1-866-363-8667 to request the enrollment form. Mail the completed order form, written prescription and payment to the address shown on the form.

Air Force Chief argues for future cuts in Reserve Forces

The Air Force's top officer, General Michael Moseley, has asked the leaders of the Air National Guard to consider possible force reductions while the active Air Force is cutting about 40,000 personnel.

His request for cuts in Air National Guard personnel comes as governors, National Guard leaders across the country, and their congressional allies are fighting an Army decision to seek funding in the fiscal 2007 budget for about 17,000 fewer Guard troops.

Moseley said he made a similar request for cuts to the Air Force Reserve leadership, but that has far fewer political implications because the Reserves do not have as powerful a lobby as the Guard and draw less support from the governors. But, Moseley said, "We have not asked them to do anything in fiscal 2007."

The Air Force has asked the Guard and Reserve leaders to examine the possibility that while the active service is making force cuts, "if there's not a parallel way to streamline their commands," the four-star general said. Moseley suggested the Guard and Reserve leaders consider

Retiree TRICARE premiums-update

The Marine Corps Times reports that the Department of Defense (DoD) has told TRICARE contractors to cancel plans for an Oct. 1 increase in health care fees for military retirees under age 65. DoD has not given up on their basic proposal, which calls for fee hikes of as much as \$1,500 a year for working-age retirees using the military health care system. But they now seem to recognize that fierce opposition from military and veterans groups and growing concern in Congress have made an Oct. 1 effective date for the increases virtually impossible.

At the March 14, Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee hearing, the Republican chairman and Democratic ranking member of the Senate Armed Services personnel panel promised military service associations they would not support the fee increases until an independent audit of the military health care system is completed to determine if there are other ways to cut increasing health care costs.

Additionally, the Republican chairman and ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee have announced they oppose the TRICARE fee increases, and a bipartisan bill was introduced in the House to block any increases without specific congressional approval. The Pentagon's proposed fee increases, still being reviewed by the White House's Office of Management and Budget, would increase enrollment fees, co-payments and deductibles for military retirees under the age of 65 and their families. Increases would be based on pay grade, and would apply to both TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Standard, with a maximum increase of \$1,500 a year.

eliminating some layers of command and staffing similar to what the active Air Force is doing.

The general acknowledged the sensitivity of proposing cuts in the Guard, which have to balance the requirements imposed by their federal duties and their state roles. But he stressed how committed the active Air Force was to involving its Guard and Reserve units in its operations and plans.

YOUR GUARD HISTORY

April 4-10, 1968: Upon learning of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in Memphis, Tenn., more than 125 communities in 14 states and Washington, D.C., erupted into violence and arson.

Sporadic sniper fire in several cities caused Guardsmen to return fire, especially in Chicago, Kansas City and Detroit. Police used tear gas almost everywhere trouble broke out, with heavy usage in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

In six days of rioting, nearly 50,000 Guardsmen served on active state duty—the largest peacetime call up of its kind in history at that time.

Of this number about 5,000 were Air Guard personnel used to support operations by moving men and supplies to the troubled areas.



New bill rewards employers and military spouses

Traditionally, employers are hesitant to hire military spouses who can relocate at the drop of a hat, according to Rand Corp. data. As a result, many military spouses go without work for months or even years. And, in order to make ends meet, many spouses take employment below their skill level. But the U.S. Government is hard at work to fix the problem.

The Military Spouses Employment Act - proposed by U.S. Representative John Carter (TX-R) was introduced recently to give U.S. employers a tax incentive for hiring military spouses. This bill was created to help military spouses find quality employment and encourage employers to hire them.

"[Military spouses] have a challenge finding employment at their skill level," says Rep. Carter. Some employers have been hesitant. This will give them an incentive."

Congressman Carter proposed that the Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) expand to include the Military Spouses Employment Act. What's more the Act includes all active-duty military spouses, as well as spouses of National Guard and Reserve members who are activated for 90 days or more.

"This Act joins us to the WOTC today. We are just adding ourselves to that category's vocational rehabilitation," says Carter.

The WOTC currently allows employers tax credits for hiring the following categories:

- A member of a family that is receiving or recently received Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or Aid to Families with Dependent Children.
- An 18- to 24-year-old member

of a family that is receiving or recently received food stamps.

- An 18- to 24-year-old resident of one of the federally designated Empowerment Zones (EZs), Enterprise Communities (ECs) or Renewal Communities (RCs).

- A 16- to 17-year-old EZ/EC or RC resident hired between May 1 and September 15 as a Summer Youth Employee.

- A veteran who is a member of a family who receives or has recently received food stamps.

- A disabled person who completed or is completing rehabilitative services from the State or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

- An ex-felon who is a member of a low-income family.

- A recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

"Employers are saying [the Act] is a great idea. It's enough incentive for employers to hire great military spouses," Carter says.

If Congress approves the Military Spouses Employment Act, employers could claim an income tax credit of 40 percent for the first \$6,000 in wages for qualified spouses who remain on the payroll for at least 400 hours, reports the office of Congressman Carter.

The bill is pending, but Congressman Carter plans to see The Military Spouses Employment Act pass "between now and this summer."

"I'm going to push this as hard as I can," Congressman Carter adds.

How do you feel about this Act? It's important to let your public officials know if you are for this legislation. Contact your public officials and let them know!

DoD offers scholarships for Scientists, Engineers

The Defense Department has created a full scholarship program in response to the crisis of a shrinking pool of American scientists and engineers. Sue C. Payton, DoD's deputy undersecretary for advanced systems and concepts, told a group of some 300 middle and high school students this month that more than half of science and engineering graduates from American universities are foreign nationals. The United States is also graduating young engineers in much lower numbers than China, Japan and Korea. Another problem is the aging science and engineering work force in America, nearing retirement.

So the DoD is investing \$155 million in the National Defense Education Program from 2006 to 2011. The money is being earmarked for scholarships in the physical sciences, physics, chemistry, applied mathematics, biology, hardware and software design, engineering and languages.

Their goal is to deepen the talent pool in the science, technology, engineering and math fields by improving understanding of those fields as well as the teachers abilities, and fostering youth interest in those fields as career choices.

Payton told the students that the DoD is developing a pathogen-detection system, as well as using technology to analyze terrorist documents and track, locate, and target terrorists. She asked the young people to make a difference for their future and their country's future.

"America will need you to "operationalize" future innovation, to be skilled and relentless in overcoming enormous technical challenges, to marshal resources, to build teams of experts with selfless dedication," she said.

Army says visible tattoos OK on soldiers if not offensive

The Army now permits tattoos on the hands and back of the neck if they are not offensive, according to recently modified Army Regulation 670-1. The change was made because Army officials realized the number of potential recruits bearing skin art had grown enormously over the years.

About 30 percent of Americans between the ages of 25 and 34 have tattoos,

according to a Scripps Howard News Service and Ohio University survey. In all, the post-baby-boom generations are more than three times as likely as boomers to have tattoos.

As a result of tattoo attitude changes, Army Regulation 670-1, chapter 1-8E (1) has been modified. Additionally, paragraph 1-8B (1) (A) was revised to state:

"Tattoos that are not extremist, indecent, sexist or racist are allowed on the hands and neck. Initial entry determinations will be made according to current guidance."

The new policy allows recruits and all Soldiers to sport tattoos on the neck behind an imaginary line straight down and back of the jawbone, provided the tattoos don't violate good taste.

ESGR
EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF
THE GUARD AND RESERVE
Helpline
by LTC (Ret.) Paul Jones



Employer Orientation Visits to AT 06

June, and the Annual Training periods, is fast approaching. I have read the Annual Training (AT) training schedules and those for the MLRS and Infantry Battalions look pretty exciting with a number of live fire exercises. My visits with your commanders and the events planned for AT 06 are the main reasons we have planned to bring employers to selected AT sites. It is so much easier to show someone what is going on than to just talk about it.

Hopefully by now you have heard from your commander and/or first line leader about the trips below. Time is short to get those nominations in. We must have our plan to National ESGR at least 30 days before the event to be approved. The last thing we want to do is be forced to cancel these trips based on too many empty seats on the busses, or based on the fact we couldn't meet the National approval suspense because of lack of nominees.

Here is a major change that should interest many of you. Commanders in the field contacted us and mentioned that a spouse plays an extremely important role is the successful career of a Soldier. These commanders asked if bosses/supervisors of a Soldiers spouse could be invited. The OKESGR committee unanimously agreed this is a great idea. Please let your spouse know about this new change to the program and encourage an invitation to the boss.

Once more, here are the trips:

June 10th is a trip to Fort Sill to observe MLRS live fire. The trip is sponsored by the 1/158 and 1/171 FA with one bus departing from the Altus Armory, and one departing from the Lawton Armory.

June 18th is a trip to Fort Chaffee to observe a Field Artillery and Mortar live fire. The trip is sponsored by the 1st Battalion, 279th Infantry with one bus departing from the Sand Springs Armory.

June 18th is a trip to Camp Gruber to observe an Infantry live fire exercise. The trip is sponsored by the 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry with one bus departing from the Stillwater Armory.

The next issue of Frontline will be in June, and our trips will be underway or about to take place. Consequently, this is the last column I will dedicate to the trips and I encourage you to take advantage of this program. Come on folks!! Let's fill up these busses so we can continue this program in the future.

Guard Your Benefits

By Sue Stice
JFHQ Full-Time
State Benefits Advisor (SBA)

Veteran Affairs Services

Deceptive commercial solicitation practices

A warning has been issued regarding a group known as Veterans Affairs Services. It is NOT to be confused with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This group first appeared in the Fort Sill area in 2003 and according to reports it is apparently trying to work its way back into our area.

Persons representing this company are said to approach military installations as well as National Guard and Reserve units requesting permission to provide on-base benefits education. They appear official and have even been known to hand out brochures/materials/booklets and other materials that apparently can be found in Department of Veterans Affairs offices.

The group works diligently to arrange "mass" or "group" briefings to Soldiers during which they hand out a little white card that asks for personal information on the Soldier and his family. Their logo tries to give the impression they are a federal entity but they are not. They then share the information with insurance/loan/mutual fund companies, after which Soldiers and families are contacted repeatedly by one or more of these companies.

According to James M. Ellis CIV OSD PR, "We received an email through the legal chain reference this

outfit. I checked out their web site. The page that is supposed to display their "Services" is not complete so it's not possible to tell if they sell insurance or investments. You may want to give our Service solicitation POC's a heads up. This office is not aware of this organization currently conducting any on-base benefits education or solicitation but recommend they be excluded if they request permission to do either because their logo tries to give the impression they are a federal entity, which they aren't."

All units/organizations should be on the lookout for this group. They are Veterans Affairs Services-----not the Department of Veterans Affairs. Their webpage is: <<http://www.vaservices.org/us/branches/guard/vets.html>>

On a good note, the following information should be distributed to the widest extent:

"Unmet Needs," is a Veterans of Foreign Wars program that gives financial aid to military families. Military members or their spouses may apply for financial aid through the Unmet Needs website at <http://www.unmetneeds.com/>. The VFW reviews the applications and makes contact with applicants, as well as their military commands or family support representatives, to talk about their specific financial needs. When approved, the money goes directly to the company or utility to whom the family owes money. Unmet Needs has raised over \$900,000 to help 1,000 military families since its inception in June, 2004.

Engineer earns Bronze Star Medal Continued from page 4

Bruner lamented after the ceremony.

"The only thing I knew was I was supposed to be here at 12 o'clock. I missed the time hack a little because I was thinking about getting everybody on and off the range."

After the ceremony, Capt. Bruner said he was speechless for the most part, which by his own admission is somewhat hard to believe for those who know him.

"There are others who have done more than I did," he said. "The non-commissioned officers and the enlisted Soldiers are the ones who make things happen and you're only as good as those around you. It's going to take a little

time for this to soak in."

Capt. Bruner was presented his Bronze Star Medal by Col. Kenneth Moore, commander of the 90th Troop Command in Oklahoma City.

During the ceremony, Col. Moore highlighted Capt. Bruner's accomplishments, particularly his cross-training from one unit to another because there was a need.

"He stepped up to the challenge and performed meritoriously," Col. Moore said. "The Bronze Star Medal is an outstanding accomplishment and it thrills me to be able to present an award of this magnitude to a young captain from this command."



Reflection

By CH (CPT) Brad Hanna
JFHQ Full-Time Support Chaplain

Military Leaders in Scripture- Moses

If you are seeking some good examples of military leadership look no further than the Bible. This month we begin taking a look at some of the great warriors in Scripture.

After the exodus from Egypt the Israelites began making their way to the land of promise. Along the desert way they would encounter resistance. It was up to their general, Moses, to direct and lead the Hebrews into battle. The following account is a prime example of the influence Moses had in battle.

So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us, and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." And Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek... So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. (Ex. 17:9-13)

Moses chose his subordinate commander, gave the orders and positioned himself to track the battle. He also kept a direct role in the fight as the mediator between God and his armed forces. The result was victory for the Israelites. Moses proved himself as a military leader. Early Church father St. Ambrose states,

Thus, holy Moses feared not to undertake terrible wars for his people's sake, nor was he afraid of the arms of the mightiest kings, nor yet was he frightened at the savagery of barbarian nations. He put to one side the thought of his own safety so as to give freedom to the people. (St. Ambrose, The Duties of the Clergy)

Though the Biblical record does not tell of Moses' military exploits prior to his emergence as the leader of the Hebrews, 1st century A.D. Jewish historian, Josephus, records portions of the prophet's Egyptian military record prior to his generalship of the Israelite army.

The Egyptians, under this sad oppression, betook themselves to their oracles and prophecies: and when God had given them this counsel, to make use of Moses the Hebrew and take his assistance, the king commanded his daughter to produce him, that he might be the general of their army. (Flavius Josephus, The Antiquities of the Jews, II.X.1)

According to this record Moses was made an Egyptian general. Josephus then describes Moses' abilities as a military tactician against the Ethiopians:

Moses prevented the enemies, and took and led his army before those enemies were apprised of his attacking them; for he did not march by the river, but by land, where he gave a wonderful demonstration of his sagacity. (Antiquities, II.X.2)

Though we do not have these accounts in the Biblical record, Josephus' account is nevertheless cited by Irenaeus, another early Church father. (Irenaeus, Fragments of the Lost Writings, XXXII.) Whether or not Moses gained his skill as a military leader while in Egypt, we can clearly see that God used him in this role. For his faithful service to God and country Moses was exalted to leader of the Hebrew people and was chosen to receive God's Law from Mt. Sinai.

Legion of Merit began as an award for foreigners

by Robert F. Donami & Fred L. Borch,
Air Force Times

The Legion of Merit, today usually given as a retirement award to long-serving senior officers and very senior noncommissioned officers, was created during World War II to recognize Allied military and civilian personnel.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, America entered the war on the side of the British, French, Soviets and other allies. When American airmen flew missions with these European allies, there was no way to officially recognize the latter's contribution because the U.S. did not have a general decoration for non-combat achievement. The Army Distinguished Service Medal was not considered appropriate for award to foreigners.

To meet this need, Congress created the Legion of Merit on July 20, 1942. The medal, modeled after France's Legion of Honor, was established in four classes or "degrees" Chief Commander, Commander, Officer and Legionnaire. The idea was that having four levels would permit giving the award to a variety of men and women, military and civilian, for outstanding services. The highest classes, Chief Commander and Commander, were reserved for high-ranking foreigners; the lower classes, Officer and Legionnaire, were for lower-ranking foreigners, and American officers and enlisted personnel.

In September 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt directed that all proposed awards of the Legion of Merit be submitted to him for his approval. In 1943, however, recognizing that this requirement was slowing the award process and preventing deserving individuals from receiving the decoration, Roosevelt relented, at least to some extent deciding that future awards of the Legion of Merit to American military

personnel could be made without his involvement.

As more awards were made to

Americans, a new question arose: Which of the four classes of the decoration should go to a deserving service member? There was such confusion that the Secretaries of War and Navy sent a letter to Roosevelt recommending that the four classes apply only to foreign and Allied personnel; Americans should be awarded the Legion of Merit without degree, the letter urged. Roosevelt agreed, and this policy continues. Today all U.S. military personnel decorated with the Legion of Merit receive an award that makes no reference to class or degree.

To receive a Legion of Merit, a service member must have demonstrated "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service and achievements." Thus, a Legion of Merit for achievement requires the recipient to be in a key job or position and be a senior officer or very senior noncommissioned officer. As a result, few Legions of Merit are awarded for achievement.

Rather the majority of decorations are presented as retirement awards.

The obverse of the Legion of Merit is a five-pointed white star whose five arms are edged with purple enamel. In the center of the star is a circle of clouds surrounding a blue disk containing 13 white stars representing the 13 original colonies. In between each of the five arms are two crossed arrows pointing outward. The reverse of the medal has the inscription "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and "ANNUIT COEPTIS MDC-CLXXXII." The latter signifies that the Legion of Merit traces its origins to Gen. George Washington's Purple Heart, conceived in 1782. This fact also explains why the Legion of Merit's ribbon is so similar to that of the Purple Heart.

